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December 8, 1994

Steven L. Zaccard, Fire Marshal
Saint Paul Fire Department
100 East Eleventh Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Steve:

I am enclosing the following materials relating to HUD's Housing Quality Standards:

1. HUD Housing Inspection Manual for the Section 8 Existing Housing Program (3/89), which includes
 - Federal Regulations (24 CFR Sec. 882.109)
 - HUD Handbook Sec. 7420.7 CHG 3 (6/83)
 - HUD Inspection Checklist for the Section 8 Existing Housing Program (9/81), and some additional explanations
2. HUD Inspection Form for the Section 8 Existing Housing Program (6/83)
3. St. Paul PHA's own Section 8 HQS Inspection Form (6/89)
4. St. Paul PHA's own summary explanation of HQS, which we provide to property owners.

The Housing Quality Standards are not as complex as this pile of papers suggests; most of these documents cover the same points in similar ways. I wanted to give you everything that described the HQS so you would have the opportunity to review it all.

Thanks for volunteering to coordinate the comparison of HQS and City Codes. If Pat Fish can do the first draft, Mary Ahern and others here will review the HQS aspects. Depending on how long the first draft takes, we should be able to have the comparison for the January 25 Council CED Committee meeting. Recommendations for change may take more consideration, and an opportunity for other stakeholders to comment.

Please call me if you have questions or need need more paper!

Sincerely,

F. Allen Hester
Special Projects Supervisor

Encl.





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PHA 011803



HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

LIVING ROOM

- Each unit must have a least one habitable room which is not a kitchen or a bath.
- An **efficiency apartment** (living/sleeping room with a kitchen area) is considered a living room.
- If the only room besides the kitchen and bath appears to be inadequate in size, note this on the inspection form and the tenant should make the decision on the unit's acceptability for them.

Electrical

- There must be two working outlets or one working outlet and one working light fixture in the living room. This standard is to assure that the electrical service to the room is adequate. If there is one working outlet and one working light fixture, the light fixture must be a permanently installed ceiling or wall fixture.
- **Electrical set ups not acceptable**, such as table or floor lamps, ceiling lamps plugged into a socket or extension cords plugged into another plug.
- **Electrical hazards**, such as broken or frayed electrical wires, bare metal wires not covered by rubber or plastic insulation, loose or improper wire connections to outlets.

Security

- All windows or doors accessible from the outside must be lockable to reduce the risk of burglary or other unlawful entry into the unit.

Definitions

- **Accessible to the outside** means doors that open to the outside or to a common public hall, windows with sills less than 6 feet off the ground, windows or doors leading on to a fire escape, porch or other outside place that can be reached from the ground.
- **Lockable** means a door or window that has a properly working lock, is nailed shut or is designed not to be opened.

Windows

- Windows nailed shut for security is acceptable, but the nailing must not close the only other means of egress from the building in case of fire and must not decrease the air circulation of the unit. If the room is regularly USED FOR SLEEPING, there must be one window that is operable unless none of the windows is designed to be opened.

- There must be at least one window in the living room for natural light.
- Windows must be free of signs of severe deterioration or missing or broken out panes.
- **Severe deterioration of windows** would be windows that no longer keep out wind, snow or rain, or where broken glass presents a hazard.
- If the windows are only moderately deteriorated, they should pass the Housing Quality Standards (HQS).

KITCHEN

- Each unit must have a kitchen or kitchen area for preparation and storage of food. This can be a separate room or an area of a larger room.

The kitchen or kitchen area must contain:

- a sink with piped hot and cold water for preparing food and washing dishes;
- a stove for cooking food (must have both an oven and a stove or range with top burners and it must work); and
- a refrigerator to store perishable food (the refrigerator can be in a pantry or back hall) and the refrigerator must work.
- one working electrical outlet AND one working permanently installed light fixture (**Note: this is different from the living room requirement**).

The kitchen does not have to have a window.

BATHROOM

- There must be at least one bathroom present in the unit for exclusive use of the occupant.
- The bathroom must have a toilet, wash basin and tub or shower.
- There must one permanent light fixture; **NO OUTLET IS REQUIRED**.
- No window is required, but there must be a window or a working vent system.
- **Toilet** -- must be for the exclusive use of the tenant and must allow for privacy (closed off by a door). Items that should not fail a toilet but that should be noted on the form are: constant running water, chipped or broken porcelain, a cracked toilet seat or a slowly draining toilet.

- **Wash Basin** -- must be present and permanently installed. It may be located separately from the other bathroom facilities. Items that should not fail a wash basin but that should be noted on the form are: low water pressure, dripping faucets, minor leaks, cracked or chipped porcelain, slow drain, partially rusted or defective faucet handles, basin insecurely fastened to wall and floor.
- **Tub or Shower** -- must be present but it does not need to be in the same room as the other facilities. Items that should not fail a tub or shower but that should be noted on the form are: dripping faucets, minor leaks, cracked porcelain, slow drain, absent or broken support rod for shower curtain, cracked or broken or missing tile, deteriorated grout around tub.
- **Ventilation** -- there must be an openable window or a working exhaust vent system. Those vent systems that will pass are: electric fan vents, shafts that allow air to escape to the outside without an electric fan. All windows and ventilation systems must vent to the outside, attic or crawl space.

OTHER ROOMS USED FOR LIVING AND HALLS

- All rooms must be inspected.
- **Other rooms** means as many other rooms used for living as are present in the unit. Also, entrance halls, corridors, halls and staircases that are located WITHIN THE UNIT and are part of the area used for living.
- **Used for Living** means areas of the unit walked through or lived in on a regular basis. This does not include rooms or areas permanently or nearly permanently closed off or infrequently entered, such as a utility room, shed, porch or basement. The occasional use of a washer or dryer in an otherwise unused room does not constitute "regular" use of the room.
- **Secondary Room** means a room NOT used for living. Should be inspected for security and electrical hazards.

BUILDING EXTERIOR

Foundation must be sound and free from hazards to assure the foundation can support the building and keep ground water out of the basement under normal rainfall conditions.

Unsound or Hazardous Foundation would be a foundation with severe structural defects indicating the potential for structural collapse or foundations that allow significant entry of ground water. If the piers or other parts of the foundation look bad but the structure above feels stable, the foundation should pass.

Stairs, Rails and Porches must be sound and free from hazards to assure the condition does not pose a danger to the tenants. The tenant must be safe from tripping or falling.

Unsound or Hazardous Stairs, Porches, Balconies or Decks would be those with severe structural defects like broken, rotting or missing steps, absence of handrail when there are extended lengths of steps (4 or more

consecutive), absence of or insecure railing around a porch or balcony approximately 30 inches or more from the ground. Also included would be steps or sidewalks not attached to the building but leading to it.

Roof, Gutters and Downspouts must be sound and free from hazards to assure that the tenant is not exposed to any risk of structural collapse and that the roof protects the tenant's unit from outside elements.

Unsound or Hazardous Roof

- a roof that has serious buckling or sagging that indicates the potential for structural collapse;
- a roof that has large holes or other defects that would allow significant air or water infiltration; or
- a roof that is not weather tight and allows significant amounts of water to leak through to the interior of the unit occupied by the tenant is unacceptable and should fail.

Gutters and Downspouts

The purpose of gutters and downspouts is to channel water away from exterior walls and foundations.

- Deterioration of gutters and downspouts should fail if it causes significant amounts of water to enter the unit.
- The presence of gutters and downspouts are not required, but if they are present, they must be in working order.

Exterior Walls must be sound and free from hazards to assure the tenant is not exposed to any danger of structural collapse and that the walls are weather tight.

Unsound or Hazardous Exterior Walls

- Exterior walls that show serious defects like buckling, bowing or leaning, or contain large cracks or falling or missing piece of masonry, or that significant portions have deteriorated to allow water and serious drafts to penetrate.
- If an exterior wall DOES NOT affect the tenant's unit, it would not fail.

The **Chimney** must be sound and free from hazards to assure the tenant is not exposed to the potential collapse of the chimney and that the chimney will safely carry smoke, fumes and gasses from the unit to the outside.

Unsound and Hazardous Chimney

- If the chimney is seriously leaning or shows evidence of deterioration or disintegration of its parts.

Lead Paint -- Exterior Surfaces

- All exterior surfaces which are accessible to children under seven years of age must be FREE from cracking, scaling, peeling, chipping and loose paint or ADEQUATELY TREATED OR COVERED to prevent exposure of such children to lead-based paint hazards to assure that the dwelling unit is free from hazards of lead-based paint.
- This refers to all lead-based paint existing on the exterior surface of the structure, including walls, stairs, decks, porches, railings, windows and doors.
- The requirement applies to all units whether or not children will occupy the unit.

HEATING

- The heating equipment must be capable of providing adequate heat to all rooms used for living to assure that the occupant will have adequate heat in the unit during the cold months of the year.
- **Adequate Heat** means the heating system is capable of delivering enough heat to assure a healthy living environment in the unit.
- **Direct Heat** means that each room used for living has a heat source.
- **Indirect Heat** means that if there is no heat source present in the room, the heat can enter the room easily from a heated adjacent room.
- If there is no direct or indirect heating source in a room used for living, **the unit fails this requirement.**

Safety of Heating Equipment

- The unit must be free from unvented fuel burning conditions to assure that the occupant is not exposed to the hazards of fire or escaping gasses from the heating system.
- The main concerns are: the potential of fire and the escape of exhaust fumes into the living area.
- Problems with a heating system that would not fail a unit but should be noted on the form are: dirty floor registers, missing covers on hot water baseboard heating pipe and a malfunctioning radiator valve.